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THE ASSIMILATION OF ARAB MUSLIMS
IN ALBERTA

by



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THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

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The undersigned certify that they have read and recommended to the Faculty Of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled "The Assimilation Of Arab Muslims In Alberta" submitted by Abdelmoneim M. Khattab in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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ABSTRACT

The present research attempted to investigate the reciprocal relationship between the Islamic faith and the assimilation of the Arab Muslims in Alberta. Some other variables, believed to have a bearing on the process of assimilation, such as age, sex, generation, education, income, and length of residence in Canada were included in the research.

For the purpose of this study, 251 Arab Muslim adults in Edmonton and Lac La Biche completed the questionnaires which were designed for the research.

Data analysis indicates that there is a negative relationship between religiosity and assimilation. When two, at a time, of the above noted supplemental factors were controlled, the findings continued to show a negative relationship between religiosity and assimilation although the magnitude of this relationship changed from one subgroup to the other. These results support the conclusion that Islam plays a somewhat negative role in the assimilation of the Arab Muslims into the Canadian way of life.

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CHAPTER I

THE NATURE OF THE INVESTIGATION

The purpose of this study is to investigate the role of religiosity in the assimilation of the Arab Muslims in Alberta. Two of Alberta's three Arab Muslim communities, Edmonton and Lac La Biche, are included in the investigation. The reciprocal influence of religious attitudes and behavior, on the one hand, and assimilation into the larger society, on the other hand, will be assessed. The relationship between religiosity and assimilation will be examined, controlling for certain variables which are believed to influence either religiosity or assimilation. With the understanding that Islam is a religion and a way of life, it is hoped that this study will shed significant light on the adjustment of a non-European religio-ethnic group in a North American setting.

Background of Theory and Research

In a recent publication, Milton M. Gordon notes that:

"Over the course of the American experience, 'philosophies' or goal systems of assimilation, have grouped themselves around three main axes. These three central ideological tendencies may be referred to as 'Anglo-conformity'....'Melting-pot'....and 'Cultural pluralism'."¹

Briefly, the "Anglo-conformity" theory implies the adoption of the culture of the host society, whose core group is the Anglo-Saxon, and the abandonment by an immigrant group of their native culture.

The "Melting-pot" theory implies the eventual and complete disappearance of any distinctions, physical or cultural, between the immigrant group and the host population. Finally, "Cultural pluralism" implies the existence of a mosaic of ethnic and religious groups who are linked together by common values and interdependent life.

The idea of "Anglo-conformity" in the United States of America had reached its peak in the so-called "Americanization Movement" which prevailed during World War I. This movement aimed at the full transformation of the immigrants to the Anglo-Saxon culture in a very short time: a process which was described later as "pressure cooking assimilation."²

While the "Anglo-conformity" was the most prevalent ideology of assimilation in the American society, the philosophy of the "Melting-pot" emerged, not to make from the American people a slightly modified England, but to blend the different cultures of the immigrants into a common culture to be followed by all the American people. In the middle of the 1940's, the idea of "Melting-pot" was modified by the sociologist Ruby Jo Reeves Kennedy who investigated the intermarriage trends in New Haven among three religious groups: Protestants, Catholics, and Jews. Kennedy found that while intermarriage was taking place across nationality background lines, it tended to be contracted mainly between people of a similar religious background. Hence, the picture in New Haven, as Kennedy states, represents a "triple melting-pot" based on religious divisions rather than a "single melting-pot."³

Whether it is a single or triple melting-pot, it should be recognized that during the process of change the culture of the old country tends to disappear gradually. With reference to Canada, "a Hungarian priest in his sermon compared it to a chalk island which is constantly battered by the waves of the sea and diminishes bit by bit until it disappears from sight. The old country patterns are washed away by the sea of the Canadian experience."⁴

It is worth noting that the contact between the immigrants and the natives, and the ensuing social interaction between them is of great importance for their assimilation. This view is supported by Richardson in his theoretical statement on assimilation in which he reports that "the frequency of social participation between immigrants and natives is positively associated with assimilation."⁵

Both the "Anglo-conformity" and the "melting-pot" theories aimed at absorbing the immigrants into the American structure and at the elimination of their groups as communal entities; but this aim was not shared by the great majority of the immigrants themselves. Hence, the theory of "cultural pluralism" was a fact in American society before becoming a theory.⁶

The theory that has the support of many Canadian leaders is the one which implies the preservation of the various cultural heritages but not the political loyalties - the theory whose aim is unity, not conformity, or in other words, unity in diversity.⁷

Cultural diversity in Canada is readily apparent today. Toronto, for example, has many movie houses which only show either Italian or German films. The radio stations broadcasting in foreign languages are increasing their hours. The number of newspapers publishing in languages other than English and French has tripled since the 1930's.⁸ The view that certain aspects of the cultures of the different ethnic groups should be preserved and even encouraged is becoming more prevalent among Canadians as a whole. It is now customary on national holidays to see and hear a variety of performances of the different ethnic groups which are appreciated by all audiences. Such emphasis on diversity of cultural heritage has been woven into the fabric of Canadian mentality. This view of preservation of the ethnic cultures is clearly formulated by Dr. Kerkconnell who suggests: "Our universities might foster their languages and literatures, or even set up an institute of cultural traditions to preserve and encourage all that may contribute to the diversity of our cultural life."⁹

The cultural mosaic theory was emphasized by the Canadian Governor General, Lord Tweedsmuir, in his address to the Ukrainian Rural Community of Fraserwood on September 21, 1936, in which he said:

"You have accepted the duties and loyalties as you have acquired the privileges of Canadian citizens, but I want you also to remember your old Ukrainian traditions - your beautiful handicrafts, your folk songs and dances, and your folk legends. I do not believe that any people can be strong unless they remember and keep in touch with all their past. Your traditions are all valuable contributions towards our Canadian culture which cannot be a copy of any one old thing - it must be a new thing created by the contributions of all the elements that make up the nation ... you will all be better Canadians for being also good Ukrainians."¹⁰

In Assimilation In American Life, Gordon divides the assimilative process into seven types of variables:¹¹

1. "Cultural or behavioral assimilation" which is the change by immigrants of their cultural patterns to those of the host society.

2. "Structural assimilation" which is a large scale entrance by immigrants into cliques, clubs, and institutions of the host society, on a primary group level.

3. "Marital assimilation" which is a large scale inter-marriage between ethnic groups and the larger society.

4. "Identificational assimilation" which occurs when members of an ethnic group identify themselves as full members of the host society.

5. "Attitude receptional assimilation" which is the absence of prejudice.

6. "Behavior receptional assimilation" which is the absence of discrimination.

7. "Civic assimilation" which is the absence of value and power conflict on issues prevailing in the host society's way of life.

These seven types of assimilation are related to each other. It is possible to consider both cultural and structural assimilation as corner stones and the other types as branches of these foundations. On the one hand, structural assimilation influences the other types. If children of different ethnic groups belong to the same play-group during their childhood, then in their adolescence they may know and befriend each other, a situation which could lead to intermarriage between the

descendants of different cultural backgrounds. In the event that such intermarriage occurs on any large scale, the minority group is more likely to lose its ethnic identity. On the other hand, if the cultural assimilation has been complete, i.e., the immigrant has been absorbed into the cultural patterns of the host society, then no value conflicts on civic issues are likely to arise between the members of the ethnic minority and the members of the host society. This idea of the relationship between the several factors influencing the process of assimilation is generalized by Gordon as follows:

"Once structural assimilation has occurred either simultaneously with or subsequent to acculturation, all of the other types of assimilation will naturally follow."¹²

Because of the assumed relationship between the different types of assimilation, this investigation is limited to cultural, structural, marital and identificational assimilation. As Gordon states above, cultural and structural assimilation are basic types and hence they must be included in this study. With regard to marital assimilation, it is included in the study because of the unique position of Islam concerning inter-faith marriages. In this connection, it should be noted that Islam permits the marriage of a Muslim boy to a non-Muslim girl (of the Christian or Jewish faith), but prohibits the marriage of a Muslim girl to a non-Muslim boy. Finally, identificational assimilation is included in the study because it represents a direct expression of attitude, on the part of the Arab Muslims, toward the host society. Attitude receptional behavior receptional, and civic assimilation, then, are not included in

the study, partly because they are related to the other variables, and partly because their adequate study would require additional information from a Canadian sample. This is beyond the scope of the present study.

Religiosity

The second main variable in this study is religiosity.

In a recent publication, Abdo Elkholy states:

"When religion is identical with nationality or race, it tends to strengthen the group solidarity and thus weaken the process of its assimilation with the adopted culture. Several centuries of Arab domination could not absorb Spanish Christianity, religion being the main factor which preserved the national solidarity of Spain. Judaism has also served to solidify the group not only as a symbol of religious identification but of national and ethnic identification as well. The literature of the minority groups provides ample evidence of the dysfunctional role that religion plays in the process of assimilation and acculturation."¹³

Initially, Islam was preached to Arab people by a prophet from amongst them who taught the Qur'an which was revealed in Arabic and is the Islamic sacred book. Islam is viewed as a complete system which organizes the relations between men. Hence, it is viewed not only as a religion, but also as a way of life and one having a special association with the Arab people. For these reasons, the Islamic religion early became identified with Arab ethnicity. This intimacy with ethnicity is another reason why Islam should play a dysfunctional role in the assimilation of Arab Muslims into the Canadian way of life.

In the light of the above considerations, the study is concerned about investigating the relationship between religiosity and assimilation among Arab Muslim groups residing in both Edmonton and Lac La Biche. The main hypothesis to be tested in this research predicts a negative relationship between religiosity and assimilation. More specifically:

THE HIGHER THE RELIGIOSITY, THE LOWER THE ASSIMILATION.

Conversely:

THE LOWER THE RELIGIOSITY, THE HIGHER THE ASSIMILATION.

Since age, sex, generation, education, income, and length of residence in Canada are factors believed to have an influence on the assimilative process, they will be treated as statistical controls, with the aim of discovering the extent to which they influence the relationship between religiosity and assimilation.

Significance of the Research

The Arab Muslims in Canada have rarely been the object of social scientific research. Thus, this study is important in that it seeks to:

- a) Explore some aspects of social change acquired by this group in its new environment.
- b) Explore the influence of the different variables on the process of its assimilation.
- c) Compare the results with the findings of Elkholy's study of the Arab Muslims in the United States and Barclay's investigation of

Arab Muslims in Lac La Biche, Alberta.¹⁴

Plan of the Thesis

The operational procedure for testing the main hypothesis cited above and measuring the effect of the relevant variables will be dealt with in the next chapter. The third chapter is entitled "Characteristics of the Arab Muslims in Edmonton and Lac La Biche." Chapter IV discusses one of the two main variables in the study, namely, religiosity, while assimilation is discussed in Chapter V. The last chapter summarizes the findings and discusses the conclusions drawn from the study.

FOOTNOTES

1. Milton M. Gordon, Assimilation In American Life, New York: Oxford University Press, 1964, p. 85.
2. Ibid., p. 99.
3. Ruby Jo Reeves Kennedy, "Single or Triple Melting-Pot" American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 49, 1944, pp. 331-39.
4. John Kosa, Land of Choice, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957, pp. 93-94.
5. Richard Laskin, Social Problems: A Canadian Profile, Toronto: McGraw Hill Co., 1964, pp. 249-59.
6. Gordon, op.cit., pp. 132-59.
7. Paul Yuzyk, The Ukrainian In Manitoba, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1953, pp. 208-211.
8. Frank G. Wallee, et al., "Ethnic Assimilation and Differentiation in Canada" in Bernard R. Blishen, et al., Canadian Society, Toronto: Macmillan, 1964, pp. 63-73.
9. Watson Kirkconnell, Canadian Overtones, Winnipeg: Columbia Press, 1935, Preface.
10. John Murray Gibbon, Canadian Mosaic, Toronto: Macmillan, 1938, pp. 306-307.
11. Gordon, op.cit., pp. 60-83.
12. Ibid., pp. 80-83.
13. Abdo A. Elkholy, The Arab Muslims In The United States, New Haven: College and University Press, 1966, p. 67.
14. Ibid.; and Harold B. Barclay, "The Perpetuation of Muslim Tradition in the Canadian North", Muslim World, January 1969.

CHAPTER 11

METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

The purpose of this chapter is to indicate the methods and statistical tools which were utilized in the research. In this introductory statement, however, the author wishes to emphasize a few points concerning data collection and analysis. First, because the author is the imam (religious leader) of the Arab Muslims in Edmonton, it was advisable that his name not be directly associated with the study in any way. The respondents were informed that the study was being directed by his supervisor Dr. Baha Abu-Laban. Second, a team of the Arab graduate students at the University of Alberta contacted the respondents and delivered the questionnaires in person. At the conclusion of the field work, these assistants reported that they did not feel any awareness, on the part of the respondents whom they interviewed, that the imam was involved in the study. Finally, in analyzing the data and interpreting the findings, the author was assisted and guided by his thesis committee and a few sociology colleagues, thereby eliminating the possibility of bias in this report.

The Population Studied

According to the records of the Edmonton mosque (which include listings of the names and addresses of the Arab Muslims in Alberta), the Arab Muslims in Edmonton and Lac La Biche are about 100

families, or about 300 adults, eighteen years of age and over. Of these 300 adults 251 completed the questionnaire. Thus, the response rate is about 83 per cent (or 82 per cent for the Edmonton population and 88 per cent for the Lac La Biche population).

Data Collection

The data used in this research were collected by the following methods:

- a) During May 1968, a self-administered questionnaire was distributed to all the Arab Muslims eighteen years old or over residing in Edmonton and Lac La Biche. The subjects who were unable to complete the questionnaire on their own (because of difficulty with the English language) were interviewed by a team of Arab graduate students from the University of Alberta. These students, who volunteered their services, received appropriate instructions regarding the task from the author as well as his supervisor.
- b) Seven informal interviews were conducted by the author with the presidents of the boards of directors of the mosques and some old-time immigrants.
- c) As imam of the Edmonton mosque, the author utilized his personal knowledge of the Muslim congregation which is a product of several years of contact and experience with Muslims throughout Alberta.

The Measurement of Religiosity and Assimilation

The two main variables on which this study is built are religiosity and assimilation. Hence, two scales were developed; one to measure religiosity and the other to measure assimilation.

A. The Religiosity Scale: As developed by Dr. Elkholy in The Arab Muslims In the United States, the measure of religiosity was divided into the following four subscales:¹

1. Religious Observance. This subscale measures the respondents' actual religious practices. It included the following items:²

- a) Performing the prayers five times a day,
- b) Fasting during the month of Ramadan,
- c) Abstaining from eating pork, and
- d) Abstaining from drinking alcohol.

2. Religious Knowledge. This subscale included the following items:

- a) Obligations of ablution before performing the prayer,
- b) Number of obligatory units of certain prayers,³
- c) Knowledge of the foundations of Islam, and
- d) Knowledge of some aspects of the philosophy of Islam.

3. Religious Beliefs. This subscale was composed of the following items:

- a) Believing in God,
- b) Believing in Muhammad as the last prophet,

- c) Believing in Qur'an as the word of God, and
- d) Believing in the Day of Judgment.

4. Religious Convention. This subscale was constructed in terms of the obligations of a good Canadian Muslim. It measures the attitudes toward the following religious practices:

- a) Performance of prayer five times a day,
- b) Fasting the whole month of Ramadan,
- c) Abstention from eating pork, and
- d) Abstention from drinking alcohol.

Each respondent was scored on each subscale, following the procedure of summated scales.⁴ Since most of the items had five response categories, scores of 1,2,3,4, and 5 were assigned. A value of 1 was assigned to the response reflecting "high" religiosity, and a value of 5 was assigned to the response reflecting "low" religiosity. Where the items had three response categories, values of 1,3, and 5 were assigned (again, reflecting a descending order of religiosity). Scores for each individual on each subscale were then obtained by summing these values, and an average score, ranging from 1 to 5, was computed. The cutting point was arbitrarily set at 2.2, to divide the respondents into two subgroups. For each subscale, a person whose average score was 2.2 or less was defined as high on that specific subscale of religiosity, and a person scoring 2.3 or more was defined as low on that subscale.⁵

A "total" religiosity score, was obtained for each respondent by summatting the average scores on each subscale. An average score (i.e., average of averages), ranging from 1 to 5, was then computed. As with the individual subscales, the cutting point for the "total" religiosity scale was arbitrarily set at 2.2. Thus a person with a grand average score of 2.2 or less was defined as high on religiosity, and a person with a grand average score of 2.3 or more was defined as low on religiosity.

Table 1 shows the relationships between the different subscales of religiosity and between each subscale and the "total" religiosity scale. It is clear that the correlations between these subscales and the total scale are fairly high. The subscale of religious knowledge correlates weakly with all the other subscales, but it reflects a high correlation with the total scale. In view of this evidence, the variable of religiosity in this study is operationally defined in terms of a respondent's position on the total religiosity scale.

TABLE 1
TYPES OF RELIGIOSITY CORRELATED
(Gammas)
RELIGIOSITY

Religiosity	Practice	Knowledge	Beliefs	Convention
Practice				
Knowledge	.17			
Beliefs	.80	.24		
Convention	.76	.01	.96	
Total	.77	.83	1.00	.89

B. The Assimilation Scale: To measure assimilation, the author constructed questions which are related to the following four types of assimilation:

- a) Change of cultural patterns,
- b) Attitude towards intermarriage between the Arab Muslim group and the host society,
- c) Development of a Canadian sense of "peoplehood" in place of Arab ethnicity, and
- d) Development of Primary relations through cliques, clubs, and institutions with members of the larger society.

Each respondent was scored on each subscale, following the procedure of summated scales. Since most of the items had five response categories, scores of 1,2,3,4, and 5 were assigned. A value of 1 was assigned to the response reflecting "high" assimilation, and a value of 5 was assigned to the response reflecting "low" assimilation. Where the items had less than five response categories, values were also assigned to reflect a descending order of assimilation. Scores for each individual on each subscale were then obtained by summing these values, and an average score, ranging from 1 to 5, was computed. The cutting point was arbitrarily set at 3.4, to divide the respondents into two subgroups. For each subscale, a person whose average score was 3.4 or less was defined as high on that specific subscale of assimilation, and a person scoring 3.5 or more was defined as low on that subscale.

A "total" assimilation score was obtained for each respondent by summing the average scores on each subscale. An average score (i.e., average of averages), ranging from 1 to 5, was then computed. As with the individual subscales, the cutting point for the "total" assimilation scale was arbitrarily set at 3.4. Thus a person with a grand average score of 3.4 or less was defined as high on assimilation, and a person with a grand average score of 3.5 or more was defined as low on assimilation.

Table 2 shows the relationships between the different subscales of assimilation and between each subscale and the "total"

assimilation scale. It is clear that the correlations between these subscales and the total scale are fairly high. In view of this evidence, the variable of assimilation in this study is operationally defined in terms of a respondent's position on the total assimilation scale.

TABLE 2
TYPES OF ASSIMILATION CORRELATED
(Gammas)

ASSIMILATION

Assimilation	Cultural	Marital	Identifica.	Structural
Cultural				
Marital	.67			
Identific.	.71	.54		
Structural	.88	.82	.77	
Total	.92	.86	.88	.96

Methods of Data Analysis

The cross tabulation was the main tool employed in data analysis. Gamma, a measure of association for the variables included in the study, was used to determine the direction and magnitude of the relationship between religiosity and assimilation. The supple-

mental factors, which are believed to influence the assimilative process, were controlled, two at a time, to discover the extent to which they influence the relationship between religiosity and assimilation.

FOOTNOTES

1. Abdo A. Elkholy, The Arab Muslims in The United States, New Haven: College and University Press, 1966, pp. 107-19. The scales which were used by Elkholy were slightly modified for the purpose of this study.
2. The questions in this subscale are organized on the basis of the specificity of Islamic practices. For more detailed information regarding scales construction, see Appendix I.
3. The religious knowledge included in this part of the subscale was selected from among the prayers which the author feels are rarely performed by the Canadian Arab Muslims.
4. C.A. Moser, Survey Methods In Social Investigation, London: Heinemann, 1958, pp. 238-39.
5. Regarding the subscale of religious knowledge, it should be noted that the original scores ranged from 1 to 12. These scores were subsequently translated into the five-point system which was applied to the other subscales.

CHAPTER III

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ARAB MUSLIMS IN EDMONTON AND LAC LA BICHE

The purpose of this chapter is to provide some background information about the respondents. The Arab Muslims in Alberta are clustered in three Albertan cities; Edmonton, Calgary and Lac La Biche. There are a few isolated families residing in Red Deer, High Prairie, Fort MacMurray and some other farm areas throughout the Province of Alberta. The focus of this study is the Arab Muslim groups in both Edmonton and Lac La Biche. The Edmonton group represents an urban population, while the Lac La Biche group represents the population living in an area with rural characteristics.

The Arab Muslims in Edmonton

The Arab Muslim group in Edmonton has about 225 adults the majority of whom are of Lebanese origin. They migrated to Canada from several Lebanese villages. Most of the Edmonton population, however, came from Lala, a village situated about 30 miles east of Beirut, the Lebanese capital. The first Arab Muslim immigrant to Alberta was Mr. Ali Tarrabain who came to this Province in 1903. The immigration of the Arab Muslims was relatively slow until the late 1940's after which the number was increased due to wide advertisement of immigration to Canada.¹

The Edmonton Mosque

Until the late 1930's, the number of the Arab Muslim families in Edmonton did not exceed twenty. During the depression of the 1930's, the Muslims in Edmonton met almost daily to discuss their problems and to find ways and means to strengthen their morale and preserve their traditions. In one of the meetings, some suggested the need for a community hall. Others advanced the idea of constructing a mosque. Because Muslims were few in number at that time, and in view of the scarcity of their resources, the building of a mosque seemed an impractical suggestion. But in spite of that, on May 1st 1938, they acquired a building permit for a mosque. As a second step, the "Arabian Muslim Association" was founded, and its charter and constitution became effective on September 12th of the same year. This was the beginning of serious difficulties. For example, on two occasions, the construction of the mosque was suspended because of lack of funds. The Muslim community had to seek help from outside sources: from their fellow Muslims in other parts of Alberta and in Saskatchewan, and from their Christian friends, particularly those of Arab origin. As a result of these efforts, the mosque was eventually completed. It was ready for the first religious function on November 2, 1938, when a funeral was held for Mr. Ali Tarrabain, the first Arab Muslim immigrant to Edmonton.

The Edmonton Arab Muslim group used the main floor of the mosque as a prayer hall, while the basement served as a social and recreational centre. The acting imam who belonged to the local group and who performed the role of imam until 1959, sanctioned dancing and other recreational

activities in the mosque. Beginning in 1960, however, the use of the mosque was limited to religious services as a result of the arrival of a formally trained imam from the United Arab Republic. He had been delegated to the mosque by the government of the United Arab Republic at the Community's request.

The Lac La Biche Arab Muslims and Their Mosque

Most of the Arab Muslims residing in the Lac La Biche area came from Edmonton. They were attracted by mink ranching and fur trade. One of the first immigrants to Lac La Biche was Mr. Ali Abu Shehadi who arrived in this area in 1904. In 1908, the Arab Muslims in Lac La Biche numbered only three families. When their number reached fifteen families in 1958, they established their own mosque. Friday and Sunday services are held at the mosque, and instruction in religion and the Arabic language is given to Arab children on weekends. Moreover, the mosque is used as a community hall where social gatherings are held and dinners, on specific occasions, are served. In 1963, the community invited an imam from Syria to lead them in their prayer and to teach their children the Arabic language and the basic principles of Islam. An imam arrived in Lac La Biche in that year, but he relinquished this role in 1966. This matter will be discussed in more detail later.

Characteristics of the Population Studied

There are about three times as many Muslims in Edmonton as there are in Lac La Biche. The majority of the Edmonton Arab immigrants came

originally from Lala, a small Lebanese village, and the majority of residents in Lac La Biche came from Khirbet Ruha, a neighbouring village. In Edmonton, one often hears criticisms by people originating in Lala directed at members of Khirbet Ruha who are accused of being neither cooperative with the Arab Muslim ethnic group nor helpful to the aims of the mosque in general. The situation is reversed in Lac La Biche where the criticisms are directed by Khirbet Ruha people, who constitute the majority of the population, against those originally from Lala. In Arab Muslim meetings, one often hears the Edmonton mosque referred to as belonging to the people from Lala and that of Lac La Biche as belonging to the people from Khirbet Ruha.

The national origin of the Arab Muslims in Edmonton and Lac La Biche is shown in Table 3.² It is interesting to note that 20 per cent of the Edmonton population are second generation, while only 8 per cent of the Lac La Biche group are Canadian-born.

TABLE 3
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN OF THE ARAB MUSLIMS
IN TWO ALBERTA COMMUNITIES

Country of Origin	Edmonton		Lac La Biche	
	N	%	N	%
Lebanon	129	70	57	90
Palestine	11	6	0	0
Egypt	5	3	0	0
Syria	2	1	1	2
Canada	37	20	5	8
 Total	184	100	63	100

Age and Sex Composition. If one is to describe the Muslim group in terms of age, young would be the best adjective. Since questionnaires were filled by members 18 years of age and over, the data shows that 87 per cent of the respondents in Edmonton and 83 per cent in Lac La Biche fall between 18 and 45 years of age. The sex ratio in Edmonton is 125 males per 100 females, and in Lac La Biche 94 males per 100 females.

Occupational Characteristics. The majority of the Arab Muslims, whether in Edmonton or Lac La Biche, are unskilled workers.

The data show that the majority of the Arab Muslim females are housewives (74 per cent in Edmonton and 91 per cent in Lac La Biche are unemployed). The Arab Muslim male seems to be reluctant to permit his wife to work, unless adverse economic circumstances force him to do so.

Table 4 shows the occupational distribution of the Arab Muslim labor force in Edmonton and Lac La Biche.

TABLE 4

DISTRIBUTION OF THE ARAB MUSLIMS IN TWO ALBERTA COMMUNITIES, BY MAJOR OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS AND SEX

Occupational Group	Edmonton		Lac La Biche	
	male	female	male	female
Professional %	4	1	0	0
N	4	1	0	0
Large Business %	3	0	7	0
Owner or Manager N	3	0	2	0
Small Business %	4	1	4	0
Owner or Manager N	4	1	1	0
Skilled %	5	0	4	6
N	5	0	1	2
Semi-skilled %	20	12	11	0
N	20	10	3	0
Unskilled %	55	11	54	3
N	56	9	15	1
Retired or Unemployed %	10	74	21	91
N	10	61	6	29
Total %	101	99	101	100
N	102	82	28	32

Educational Characteristics. The low occupational level of the Arab Muslims in Alberta is in part due to their illiteracy and low educational achievement. Since over 60 per cent of the population either received no education or had no more than eight years of schooling (see Table 5), it is not surprising to find among them a very high percentage of unskilled laborers and unemployed.

TABLE 5

EDUCATION OF THE ARAB MUSLIMS IN TWO ALBERTA COMMUNITIES, BY SEX

Amount of Education	%	Edmonton		Lac male	La female	Biche
		male	female			
None	%	7	40	20	72	
	N	7	33	6	23	
Grade 5 or less	%	26	19	13	13	
	N	27	16	4	4	
Grade 6-8	%	18	10	23	6	
	N	19	8	7	2	
Grade 9-11	%	27	16	27	9	
	N	28	13	8	3	
Completed High School	%	13	13	10	0	
	N	13	11	3	0	
Some College	%	2	0	7	0	
	N	2	0	2	0	
College Degree(s)	%	8	2	0	0	
	N	8	2	0	0	
Total	%	101	100	100	100	
	N	104	83	30	32	

Income. Fifteen per cent of the respondents did not answer the question on income. Since income is strongly related to education and occupation, the income of the Arab Muslim group is relatively low, as would be expected. Table 6 shows the annual family income as reported by male respondents in Edmonton and Lac La Biche.

TABLE 6

DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME AS STATED BY MALE RESPONDENTS
IN EDMONTON AND LAC LA BICHE

Income		Edmonton	Lac La Biche
No answer	%	5	6
	N	5	2
Less than	%	16	23
\$ 3,000	N	17	7
\$ 3,000-4,999	%	40	45
	N	42	14
\$ 5,000-6,999	%	20	13
	N	21	4
\$ 7,000-9,999	%	10	10
	N	10	3
\$10,000-14,999	%	6	0
	N	6	0
\$15,000 and over	%	3	3
	N	3	1
 Total	 %	100	100
	N	104	31

Family Size. The Arab Muslim Family in Lac La Biche is larger in size than its Edmonton counterpart. Table 7 shows that the median number of children per family in Lac La Biche is 5.5, compared to 3 children per family in Edmonton.

TABLE 7

DISTRIBUTION OF FAMILY SIZE AMONG THE ARAB MUSLIMS
IN TWO ALBERTA COMMUNITIES

Number of Children		Edmonton	Lac La Biche
None	%	11	4
	N	8	1
One	%	20	4
	N	15	1
Two	%	12	0
	N	9	0
Three	%	16	4
	N	12	1
Four	%	9	11
	N	7	3
Five	%	16	18
	N	12	5
Six	%	11	25
	N	8	7
Seven	%	1	11
	N	1	3
Eight	%	1	11
	N	1	3
None or more	%	4	14
	N	3	4
Total of families	%	101	102
	N	46	28

One may wonder how a large Arab Muslim family could survive on \$ 300 or \$ 400 a month. Surprisingly, most of the Arab Muslims can manage to live on and even save from such a low income. It is likely that expenditures on certain luxuries (enjoyed by the Canadian people) are not commensurate with the Arab Muslim way of life. Another important factor which may help the Arab Muslims to live on their low income seems to be the very reason for which they had immigrated to this country. They are frugally oriented since initially, their aim was to accumulate wealth in order to return to their country of origin. In addition, the spendthrift man would be ridiculed by relatives who sponsored him as an immigrant. As to the question of "reason of immigration to Canada", 37 per cent of the respondents answered "economic reason" and 7 per cent marked "economic plus other reasons", while 51 per cent answered "relatives in Canada". It may be therefore that the Arab Muslim immigrant is frugal because of economic motives for immigrating and also because of the influence of and ties to kinsmen.

The Linguistic Ability

As cited earlier, the Arab Muslim population is composed of a majority of first generation and a minority of second generation members. As would be expected, Arabic is the most common language employed by those of the first generation, while English is more commonly used among the second generation. The following table shows the respondents' perceived linguistic ability in terms of speaking, reading and writing.

TABLE 8
RESPONDENTS' PERCEIVED LINGUISTIC ABILITY IN ENGLISH AND ARABIC IN TERMS OF
SPEAKING, READING, AND WRITING, BY GENERATION
(Percentage Distribution)

TABLE 8

RESPONDENTS' PERCEIVED LINGUISTIC ABILITY IN ENGLISH AND ARABIC IN TERMS OF SPEAKING, READING, AND WRITING, BY GENERATION (Continued)

(Percentage Distribution)

LAC LA BICHE

Ability	English Language				Arabic Language			
	Speak		Read		Speak		Read	
	Generation: first	Generation: second	Generation: first	Generation: second	Generation: first	Generation: second	Generation: first	Generation: second
very well	9	20	7	40	7	40	53	40
above average	5	40	7	20	3	20	12	20
average	45	60	17	20	16	0	33	20
below average	36	0	19	20	19	40	2	0
not at all	5	0	50	0	55	0	0	20

FOOTNOTES

1. The Census of Canada in the years 1941, 1951 and 1961 shows that the number of the Arabs in Alberta, including Muslims and Christians, was 428, 504, and 754 respectively.
2. The total "N" in this and in subsequent tables may not be complete due to the fact that some respondents did not answer some of the questions.

CHAPTER IV

RELIGIOSITY

This chapter explores the effect of sex, generation and religious leadership on the religiosity of the Arab Muslims in Edmonton and Lac La Biche. Praying five times a day and fasting the whole month of Ramadan are two of the basic Islamic ritual obligations. Eating of pork and drinking alcohol are two of its important prohibitions. On the basis of these obligations and prohibitions, which are the most significant indices of Islamic religiosity, questions were developed to determine the respondents' religious practices before and after coming to Canada. By so doing an attempt is made to determine the extent to which respondents in the two Muslim groups have deviated from the religious practices in which they engaged while in the country of their origin.

It was anticipated that the community of Lac La Biche would be found to be more religious than that of Edmonton due to the rural character of the first community and also due to its larger proportion of foreign born members. The findings from this study confirm this expectation as shown in table 9.

TABLE 9
RELIGIOUS PRACTICES OF THE TWO ARAB MUSLIM COMMUNITIES

Community		Praying 5 times a day	Fasting Ramadan	Never ate pork	Never drank
Edmonton	%	4	38	94	73
	N	7	67	169	131
Lac La Biche	%	19	80	95	83
	N	12	50	60	52

The above table shows that 4 per cent of the Edmonton respondents pray five times a day, in comparison with 19 per cent in Lac La Biche; 38 per cent in the former fast the whole month of Ramadan, in comparison with 80 per cent in the latter; and 73 per cent in Edmonton never drank alcohol, while 83 per cent in Lac La Biche indicated that they never violated this prohibition.

With regard to religious observance in Lac La Biche, it is interesting to compare the results of this study with those derived from Dr. Barclay's¹ recent study of the Arab Muslims in Lac La Biche. This comparison is shown in table 10.

TABLE 10
LAC LA BICHE RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE IN BARCLAY'S
AND KHATTAB'S STUDIES

Religious Observance		Khattab's study	Barclay's study
Praying 5 times a day	%	19	10
	N	12	2
Fasting throughout	%	80	80
Ramadan	N	50	16
Never ate pork	%	95	90
	N	60	18
Never drank alcohol	%	83	75
	N	52	15

N = 64

N = 20

Table 10 shows that although Barclay's study was conducted on twenty Muslim males, while Khattab's included most of the males and females in Lac La Biche, the differences between the two results are slight. It is interesting to note that when sex was controlled in Khattab's study the results of the two studies with regard to praying five times a day were identical (i.e., Khattab's results showed only two persons performing that obligation).

With regard to the "deviation" of the respondents from the religious practices in which they engaged prior to coming to Canada, Table 11 shows a decline in religious practices in the new Canadian environment for both the Edmonton and Lac La Biche Arab Muslims. This result may, in part, be a product of a "natural" and perhaps a worldwide decline in religious practices. Also in part, this result may be a product of the new, predominantly Christian environment of the

Christian society.

TABLE 11

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES BEFORE AND AFTER COMING TO
CANADA, BY AREA OF RESIDENCE

Religious practices	Edmonton		Lac La Biche		
	before	after	before	after	
Praying 5 times	%	9	4	21	17
	N	14	6	12	10
fasting	%	62	42	79	76
Ramadan	N	92	62	46	45
never ate pork	%	99	97	96	93
	N	147	144	56	54
never drank	%	86	79	84	83
	N	128	116	49	48

Table 11 also reveals that the Lac La Biche respondents tended to experience less change in their religious practices than their Edmonton counterparts. This finding seems to support the idea that the Lac La Biche community is more conservative and more religious than the Edmonton community. It may also reflect the greater proportion of immigrants in Lac La Biche.

Sex and Religiosity

Ideally Islam stresses equality between the sexes in many areas of civic life. However, in traditional belief, it is more male oriented. This traditional belief manifests itself in the religious practices. For example, women are not encouraged to take

part in congregational prayers in the mosque. Further, the Muslim woman can not perform the pilgrimage obligation unless accompanied by a close male relative such as father, husband, brother or son; otherwise her pilgrimage will be religiously questionable.

In view of the fact that Muslim women interact less than men with members of the host society, one may expect the Muslim women to be more religious than her male counterpart. The findings of this study do not confirm this prediction. Both males and females are about alike in their practice of Islam. For example, 12 per cent of the Edmonton males fasted the whole month of Ramadan before coming to Canada in comparison with 5 per cent after coming to Canada; while 6 per cent of the females met this obligation in their home country, compared to 3 per cent in Canada. With regard to Lac La Biche 70 per cent of the males met the obligation of fasting before coming to Canada, in comparison with 66 per cent after coming to Canada; while the Lac La Biche female respondents show that all of them met this obligation before coming to Canada, compared to 87 per cent meeting it now.

Several factors seem to account for the fact that Muslim women are not any more committed to religion than men. First, because of her exposure to the mass media of communication, especially television, the Arab woman is probably as much a part of the Canadian culture as the Arab man. Second, the children who learn the Canadian culture and patterns of behavior tend to influence their mother in the same direction. Third, first and second generation women mix regularly within the context of various social and civic activities.

This exposure tends to heighten the assimilation of first generation females.

Generation And Religiosity

It has been maintained that there is a high positive relationship between generation and religiosity², the first generation being more religious than the succeeding generations. Unlike their Canadian born children, the first generation of Arab immigrants were brought up in an environment where the Arabic cultural traditions and emphasis on religion prevailed. Hence, the higher religiosity of this generation in comparison with the second and subsequent generations. Our results show that 75 per cent of the first generation members are highly religious, while 62 per cent of the second generation members are equally religious.

Since members of the second generation have acquired limited knowledge of the traditional patterns of their ancestral homeland, the traditional Arab way of life can be a source of conflict between them and their parents. In the field of marriage and mate-choice, particularly, conflicts arise and children sometimes ridicule the cultural patterns which their parents brought from the old country. An expression often heard from members of the second generation when opposed by their parents, especially in matters of marriage and mate-selection, is "I am in a free country".

The following case may illustrate the conflict between the first generation Arab immigrants and their children who represent the second generation. Miss H. is a girl 18 years of age. While

attending public school, she fell in love with one of her non-Muslim class mates who proposed to marry her. She expressed to her father a desire to marry the young man but the father refused to sanction such a marriage for many reasons. First, Islam forbids the marriage of a Muslim girl to a non-Muslim boy. Second, the Arab Muslims prefer endogamous to exogamous marriages. Finally, in this particular case, the potential spouse was from a lower social class than that of the girl.

Being relatively a rich man, the father advised his daughter to forget this boy, telling her that the marriage with a non-Muslim would be a scandal among relatives in particular, and the Arab Muslim community in general. And in order to appease her, the father bought her a new car. But the feeling of being "born in a free country", coupled with the father's unacceptable decision which was based on his traditional culture, led the girl to make her own decision and defy the wish of her family.

The laws of Alberta do not permit persons under 21 years of age to marry without the consent of their parents. Since this girl was only 18 year old, she accompanied her "fiancé" to the United States where they were married. Upon their return to her parents' house, her father was forced to accept their marriage as a fait accompli.

This case indicates one of the conflicts which can take place between first generation immigrants, who are supposed to be more committed to their religious traditions, and members of the second generation, who may have a low commitment.

The Religious Leader And Religiosity

In socio-religious groups clergymen naturally play an especially vital role. By virtue of their office they are the acknowledged leaders in the religious associations, and hence they normally exercise influence on their congregations.³

Though there is no priesthood in Islam, there are religious leaders or imams whose power stem from two main sources. In the first place, it derives from the attitude of the laity, and their respect for the office. Laymen in general, and those who are especially devoted, expect the imam to be their leader, and are prepared to take seriously his ideas and proposals. Robert Merton quotes one Protestant minister as saying:

"The advantage of being a minister is that you do not have to prove yourself. You are immediately accepted and received in all homes including the best ones."⁴

A second source of power for the Muslim religious leader lies in his position in the communication network of the group. The function of preaching the faith brings the religious leader into "group relevant" contacts with the members of his group.

As indicated earlier, the Arab Muslims of Edmonton had no trained imam for a twenty-two year period following the construction of the mosque in 1938. The religious leader during that period was not an official imam, but a volunteer shaykh who was self-educated. All religious activities performed by him were on a voluntary basis.

In 1960, the first trained imam arrived from Egypt to Edmonton at the request of the community. His arrival marked a new

chapter in the history of the Muslim community and established a new trend. The activities of the mosque have increased to the extent that they are no longer confined to the Muslim group, but also extend to non-Muslims as well.

In 1963, the Muslim group in Lac La Biche, also, appointed as a salaried imam, a teacher who received several years of religious education in Syria. Acting in that capacity, he was considered very strict as he advised Muslim women to conduct themselves after the fashion of their counterparts in Lebanon. This attitude resulted in the group's refusal to renew his term of appointment in 1966. After that time, he became self-employed in mink ranching, like most members of the Lac La Biche Arab community, and the position of imam has remained vacant.

Friday Noon Prayer In Both Communities

The Friday noon prayer in the Muslim faith has similar significance to the Sunday service in Christianity. Since Friday is a work day in Canada, the group prayer in Edmonton is attended by a few people, never exceeding 15. These are older men, either retired or self-employed, who have the time to attend. The Friday noon prayer follows a traditional order: first, a sermon in both Arabic and English is delivered by the religious leader after which there is a group prayer.

In Lac La Biche, Friday noon prayer was attended by a relatively large number of people, since most of the group members are

self-employed. Sermons were limited only to Arabic as the majority of the congregation, including the religious leader, lacked skill in the English language. After the imam's contract was terminated, the group discontinued the Friday noon prayer because no one was able to give the sermon (which is one of the essential elements of the service).

An Alternative: A Sunday Noon Prayer

Since the majority of the Edmonton group, and some members of the Lac La Biche group have no opportunity to perform the Friday prayer, a noon prayer on Sundays is performed instead in both communities. Attendance at the Sunday noon prayer is much larger than that on Friday.

It is worth noting that the Sunday noon prayer in Edmonton is attended by five to ten women who perform their prayer behind a curtain especially made for the purpose of segregating them from males.

The Sunday School

The activities of the mosque on Sundays are not limited to performing the prayer, but they also include educational activities. In Edmonton there are two Sunday schools. One is confined to teaching Muslim children the Arabic language and the fundamentals of Islam, the latter being taught in English. The second Sunday school is attended by adults who are interested in increasing their religious knowledge.

In Lac La Biche, during the term of the imam, the Sunday School emphasized the study of Arabic as a means of studying Islam. The Lac La Biche group showed more interest in educating their children

in Arabic and in acquainting them with the Islamic faith, since about eighty children attended the school as compared to only twenty-five children who attend the Edmonton Sunday School.

However, since the imam is no longer employed at Lac La Biche, the Sunday School there has been discontinued as have most other group religious activities. A similar situation likewise once prevailed in Edmonton when also, in the absence of an officially trained imam, Friday prayer and the Qur'anic school lapsed. The author on coming to Edmonton in 1964 found no Sunday school or Friday prayer. In addition, prayers on Sundays were only performed by five old people while the Ramadan fast was observed by very few.

The experience of the Lac La Biche and Edmonton communities only indicates the central significance of the qualified and dedicated religious leader in perpetuating group religious activity and thus preserving traditions in a cultural context where one religion represents a tiny minority in a predominantly Christian environment. Such a role becomes all the more important to the survival of the minority group's traditions. In other words, it might be suggested that the presence of an effective imam operates against the assimilation of the Muslim community into Canadian life.

SUMMARY

This chapter discusses the influence of sex, generation and the religious leadership on religiosity of the Arab Muslims in Alberta. It was expected that females would be higher than males on religiosity due to less exposure to the Canadian culture and way of life, but the findings did not confirm this expectation. Being born and brought up in the Canadian environment, members of the second generation were found to be less religious than the first generation immigrants. The existence of the religious leadership has been found to aid the Muslim community in preserving some of its religious traditions in a predominantly Christian environment.

FOOTNOTES

1. Harold B. Barclay, "The Perpetuation of Muslim Tradition In The Canadian North", Muslim World, January 1969.
2. Abdo A. Elkholy, The Arab Muslims in the United States, New Haven: College and University Press, 1966, p. 104.
3. Gerhard Lenski, The Religious Factor, New York: Doubleday and Co., 1963, Chapter 7.
4. Robert K. Merton, "Patterns of Influence : Local and Cosmopolitan Influentials", in Social Theory and Social Structure, (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1957, (Rev. Ed.)), p. 400.

CHAPTER V

ASSIMILATION

The purpose of this chapter is to test the main hypothesis cited in this research. As the hypothesis relates religiosity to assimilation, the chapter will start by determining the direction and magnitude of the relationship between these two variables. Since there are other factors believed to have some influence on both religiosity and assimilation, the hypothesis will be tested when two of these factors, at a time, are controlled to determine the extent to which the relationship between religiosity and assimilation is influenced.

Religiosity and Assimilation

As stated before, the purpose of this study is to investigate the role of religiosity in the adjustment of the Arab Muslims in Alberta. An Arab immigrant to Canada faces a new way of life and a new set of values. Some of these values conflict with his old traditions and others do not. It is almost axiomatic to assert that conflict between the two sets of values, old and new, influences his assimilation into the Canadian way of life. Where there is no conflict between old and new cultural patterns, assimilation may take place rapidly, but where there is a conflict, assimilation may be hindered or delayed.

It has been indicated above that the thesis of this work is that Islam plays a dysfunctional role in the process of assimilation of the Arab Muslim group in Alberta. Therefore, the main hypothesis to be tested in this research is stated as follows: THE HIGHER THE RELIGIOSITY, THE LOWER THE ASSIMILATION. Table 12 indicates the direction and magnitude of this relationship.

TABLE 12
RELIGIOSITY AND ASSIMILATION

ASSIMILATION	Religiosity	
	High	Low
High	30%	53%
Low	70	47
Total	% (N)	100 (175)

Gamma = -.46

The above table shows that there is a moderate, negative relationship between religiosity and assimilation. To determine whether this relationship is spurious or not, certain factors must be controlled. These factors include age, sex, generation, education, income, and length of residence in Canada. Because of the small "N" involved in this study, the above factors are controlled, two at a time, to examine their influence on the relationship between religiosity and assimilation.

Religiosity and Assimilation, by Age and Sex

It is appropriate at the very start to state that older people are arbitrarily defined as those 41 years of age or more, while young people are those 40 years of age or less. On the basis of this definition, and as previously stated, the Arab Muslim group constitutes a young population. It was anticipated that the age factor would have a positive influence on the assimilative process. As to the sex factor, it was predicted that males would be more assimilated than females because of their wider exposure to the Canadian culture and way of life. Table 13 shows the relationship between religiosity and assimilation, holding age and sex constant.

TABLE 13
RELIGIOSITY AND ASSIMILATION, BY AGE
AND SEX

Assimilation	AGE							
	Old		Young		Old		Young	
	male		female		male		female	
	Religiosity: H	L	Religiosity: H	L	Religiosity: H	L	Religiosity: H	L
High	43%	57%	43%	100%	19%	60%	31%	42%
Low	57	43	57	0	81	40	69	58
Total % (N)	100 (30)	100 (7)	100 (21)	100 (5)	100 (72)	100 (25)	100 (52)	100 (38)
Gamma =	-.27		-.74*		-.72		-.24	

* This gamma is computed on the basis of adding one hypothetical case in the empty cell. The computation was made as a substitute for an otherwise perfect relationship (which is an artifact of having a zero cell in the table) in order to have a more conservative estimate of the strength of the relationship.

Table 13 shows that among young people of high religiosity, a larger proportion of females are more highly assimilated than males. Likewise, among old people of low religiosity, females are more likely than males to be characterized by a high degree of assimilation. But among young people of low religiosity, males are more likely than females to be characterized by a high degree of assimilation.

It will be noted that the strength of the relationship between religiosity and assimilation varies by age and sex groups. For example, among the "old" males and among the "young" females, this relationship is relatively low (Gammas = -.27 and -.24, respectively). In contrast, the relationship is high among young males and among old females (Gammas = -.72 and -.74, respectively). It seems that young men are more defiant in defence of their original culture, while old men tend to be more willing to compromise and accept an attitude of "when you are in Rome do as the Romans do." The opposite may be said regarding women. That is, young women tend to be "liberal" while old women tend to be "conservative." It may be relevant to note here that the large majority of old women are foreign-born.

Religiosity and Assimilation by Age and Generation

When sex was replaced by the generation factor, the following findings were reached:

TABLE 14
RELIGIOSITY AND ASSIMILATION, BY AGE AND
GENERATION

ASSIMILATION		AGE									
		Old Generation				Young Generation					
		first		second		first		second			
		Religiosity:		Religiosity:		Religiosity:		Religiosity:			
		H	L	H	L	H	L	H	L		
High		40%		40%	63%	100%		19%	34%	75%	94%
Low		60		60	37	0		81	66	25	6
Total	%	100		100	100	100		100	100	100	100
	(N)	(42)		(5)	(8)	(7)		(111)	(47)	(12)	(16)
Gamma =		.009			-.62*			-.38		-.67	

* This gamma is computed on the basis of adding one hypothetical case in the empty cell. The computation was made as a substitute for an otherwise perfect relationship (which is an artifact of having a zero cell in the table) in order to have a more conservative estimate of the strength of the relationship.

Table 14 shows that members of the second generation, whether they are young or old, are highly assimilated in comparison with those of the first generation. Being born and brought up in the Canadian environment, the second generation members acquired the Canadian cultural patterns and hence are expected to be more highly assimilated than immigrants.

Surprisingly, table 14 shows a negligible relationship between religiosity and assimilation ($\text{Gamma} = .009$) among the "old" members of the first generation and a moderately low relationship among young members of the first generation ($\text{Gamma} = -.38$). But the relationship is high among the young members of the second generation ($\text{Gamma} = -.67$), as well as old members of the second generation ($\text{Gamma} = -.62$). This suggests that the generational factor, in this case a second generation status, would tend to (a) enhance the process of assimilation, and (b) weaken religious commitment to a considerable degree. In other words, the relatively high correlation between religiosity and assimilation among members of the second generation may be influenced by the conflict between the two generations, resulting in the second generation's "negative" attitudes toward Islam and the culture of the homeland.

Religiosity and Assimilation by Age and Education

To test the relationship between religiosity and assimilation further, education is introduced into the tabulation as a control variable. The "less educated" people are defined as those who attended grade eight or less, while the "highly educated" people are those of grade nine or more. The results appear in Table 15.

TABLE 15
RELIGIOSITY AND ASSIMILATION, BY AGE AND EDUCATION

ASSIMILATION	AGE							
	Old Education				Young Education			
	High Religiosity: H		Low Religiosity: L		High Religiosity: H		Low Religiosity: L	
High	64%	88%	38%	50%	39%	75%	15%	29%
Low	36	12	62	50	61	25	85	71
Total % (N)	100 (11)	100 (8)	100 (40)	100 (4)	100 (46)	100 (28)	100 (78)	100 (35)
Gamma =	-.60		-.25		-.65		-.38	

Table 15 shows that the relationship between religiosity and assimilation is higher for the better educated than the less educated respondents. These findings suggest that an increase in formal education would tend not only to enhance assimilation, but also weaken the commitment to religion to a relatively high degree.

Religiosity and Assimilation by Age and Income

In this section, income is included as a third variable in the correlation of religiosity with assimilation. People of high income are defined as those earning annual family incomes of \$7,000 or more, and people of low income as those earning less than \$7,000 a year. On the basis of this division Table 16 shows the following results:

TABLE 16
RELIGIOSITY AND ASSIMILATION, BY AGE
AND INCOME

ASSIMILA- TION	AGE							
	Old Income				Young Income			
	High Religiosity: H L		Low Religiosity: H L		High Religiosity: H L		Low Religiosity: H L	
High	88%	100%	33%	50%	50%	100%	21%	37%
Low	12	0	67	50	50	0	79	63
Total % (N)	100 (8)	100 (3)	100 (33)	100 (6)	100 (10)	100 (8)	100 (102)	100 (43)
Gamma =	+.40*		-.33		-.78*		-.39	

*

This gamma is computed on the basis of adding one hypothetical case in the empty cell. The computation was made as a substitute for an otherwise perfect relationship (which is an artifact of having a zero cell in the table) in order to have a more conservative estimate of the strength of the relationship.

The findings which appear in Table 16 show that the higher the income, the higher the assimilation. Since income is mostly based on education and occupation, and as the findings appearing in Table 15 indicate a positive correlation between education and assimilation, the two tables then support each other and confirm the reciprocal relationship between income and assimilation. This reciprocity means

that people of high income are likely to be more highly assimilated than those of low income. Also, the highly assimilated people are more likely to be financially successful than those who are less assimilated.

As in the preceding tables, Table 16 confirms that there is a negative relationship between religiosity and assimilation (while age and income are controlled), with only one exception. Unexpectedly, the relationship between these two variables is positive (Gamma = +.40) among old men of high income.

Religiosity and Assimilation by, Age and Length of Residence

Length of residence in the host society influences the attitude of an immigrant towards the acceptance of its cultural patterns. Hence, one expects that the experience of the Canadian way of life becomes more effective the longer the residence of the immigrant in this society. The factor of time, per se, will probably have a strong enough influence to affect the replacement of the original traditions by those prevailing in the host society. The findings appearing in Table 17 support this expectation.

TABLE 17
RELIGIOSITY AND ASSIMILATION, BY AGE AND LENGTH OF RESIDENCE

ASSIMILA- TION	AGE							
	Old Residence				Young Residence			
	Long Religiosity: H L		Short Religiosity: H L		Long Religiosity: H L		Short Religiosity: H L	
High	55%	67%	31%	0	43%	92%	18%	34%
Low	45	33	69	0	57	8	82	66
Total % (N)	100 (29)	100 (9)	100 (18)	0 (0)	100 (21)	100 (13)	100 (97)	100 (47)
Gamma =	-.24				-.88		-.42	

The criterion on the basis of which length of residence is determined as "long" or "short" is purely arbitrary. Those who have lived in Canada for more than 15 years are labeled as of long residence, while those who have lived here for 15 years or less are defined as of short residence. Using these definitions, Table 17 shows that there is a positive relationship between length of residence and assimilation: the longer the residence in Canada, the higher the assimilation into the Canadian way of life.

The table shows that among those of high religiosity, "older" people, whose duration of residence was short or long, tended to be

more assimilated than their "younger" counterparts. But among those of low religiosity, the younger people tend to exhibit a higher degree of assimilation than the older people (length of residence is controlled). The findings also show a negative relationship between religiosity and assimilation, as expected.

One may note that among the young people of long residence in Canada, the relationship between religiosity and assimilation is very high ($\text{Gamma} = -.88$). A long period of residence in Canada may enhance their assimilation and, at the same time, weaken their religious commitment.

SUMMARY

Chapter V has examined the relationship between religiosity and assimilation. The findings show a moderate, negative relationship ($\text{Gamma} = -.46$) between the two variables as predicted. Introduction of certain statistical controls has not changed the direction of the relationship between religiosity and assimilation. The only noteworthy exception to this statement concerns old men with high income: among this group, the relationship is positive and moderate ($\text{Gamma} = +.40$). The result is consistent with Elkholy's findings concerning the Arab Muslims in Toledo, Ohio. The matter will be discussed further in the next chapter.

The original relationship between religiosity and assimilation was examined, controlling for age, generation, education and income. These controls were applied, two at a time, with age and each of the other three variables taken separately. The results show that age in general did not play an important role in influencing the relationship between religiosity and assimilation. Thus, the relationship between religiosity and assimilation became stronger (than $-.46$) among the second generation, the highly educated, and those with a high income. In contrast, the magnitude of gamma declined below $-.46$ among the first generation, the lowly educated, and those whose income is low. This suggests that the variables in question may influence assimilation on the one hand, and religious commitment on the other.

The influence of length of residence in Canadian society on

the relationship between religiosity and assimilation is not clear cut.

Finally, the strength of the relationship between religiosity and assimilation varies by age and sex groups. It is relatively high among young males and old females, but it is relatively low among old males and young females. It may be that among Arab Muslims in an alien culture, the young males and old females assume a "conservative" role, while the old males and young females assume a "liberal" role.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The research has attempted to investigate the role of religiosity in the assimilation of the Arab Muslims in two Alberta communities, Edmonton and Lac La Biche. The reciprocal influence of religious attitudes and behavior, on the one hand, and assimilation into the larger society, on the other hand were assessed with the hope that the study may shed some light on the adjustment of a non-European religio-ethnic group to a North American setting.

For the purpose of this research 251 questionnaires were collected from 300 adults of the Arab Muslim groups residing in Edmonton and Lac La Biche. More information was obtained through informal interviews with the presidents of the board of directors of the mosques and some of old time immigrants. As the imam of the Edmonton mosque, the author utilized his personal experience of the Muslim congregation which is a product of several years of contact with Muslims in Alberta.

Following the methods of constructing summated scales, two scales were developed to measure religiosity and assimilation. The religiosity scale was made up of four subscales: observance, knowledge, beliefs and convention. Likewise the assimilation scale was made up of four subscales dealing with the following aspects of

assimilation; cultural, structural, identificational, and marital. Each of the two variables, religiosity and assimilation, was operationally defined in terms of the total scores on all the four relevant subscales.

As a dependent variable, religiosity of the Arab Muslim groups in Edmonton and Lac La Biche was examined to determine the extent to which it may be influenced by sex, generation and the existence of religious leadership. The discussion showed that, contrary to our expectation, there is no difference between males and females with regard to religiosity. This finding is in accord with Elkholy's study of the Arab Muslims in Toledo, Ohio, and Detroit, Michigan, where "no significant difference could be observed between the sexes on the over-all scale of religiosity".

With regard to generation, the second generation members showed less religiosity relative to their first generation counterparts. As in Elkholy's study, this research also indicated a positive relationship between religiosity and the existence of the religious leadership. The presence of a formally trained leader was found to aid the Muslim faith in surviving in a predominantly Christian environment.

Since the aim of the research was to investigate the role of religiosity in the adjustment of the Arab Muslims in Alberta to the Canadian way of life, religiosity and assimilation were correlated with each other to test the hypothesis which states "the higher the religiosity, the lower the assimilation". The test

of the hypothesis resulted in finding a definite negative relationship ($\gamma = -.46$) between religiosity and assimilation.

As there are some other factors, namely: age, sex, generation, education, income and length of residence in Canada, which were believed to have some influence on either religiosity or assimilation, they were introduced into the analysis as statistical controls. The aim of these operations was to determine the extent to which these factors may affect the relationship between religiosity and assimilation. Even with these controls, the findings in general show a negative relationship between religiosity and assimilation. While these findings are in accord with Barclay's observation in Lac La Biche and with Elkholy's findings in Detroit, they differ from Elkholy's results in Toledo, where it was found that "assimilation worked hand in hand with religiosity; that is, the higher in religiosity, the more assimilated the community is to the American society."

It is important to note here that the Toledo Arab Muslim community was largely made up of successful business men in the liquor business, while the Detroit community was made up mainly of factory workers. In the first community, the positive relationship between religiosity and assimilation may be a product of economic success. In Edmonton and Lac La Biche, the Arab Muslims in general are not successful economically. However, among those few who are economically successful, it is interesting to note that the relationship between religiosity and assimilation is positive. This is a

point of agreement between Elkholy's and our study.

Regarding variations in the strength of the relationship between religiosity and assimilation, the findings indicate that generation, education, and income play an important role. The original relationship between the two main variables became stronger among the second generation, the better educated, and the better-off respondents, while it weakened among those who are foreign-born, poorly educated, and low on income. The factors of age and length of Canadian residence do not seem to influence the relationship between religiosity and assimilation in any patterned way. /

Because findings with regard to the influence of religiosity on the adjustment of the Arab Muslims in Alberta and The United States are not entirely in agreement, one will have to await future studies in this field for further elucidation. However, the findings from this study indicate that Islam plays a somewhat negative role in the assimilation of the Albertan Arab Muslims into the Canadian way of life. /

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APPENDIX I

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

SOCIAL SURVEY OF THE ARAB MUSLIMS IN ALBERTA

We are seeking your assistance in a study which is being directed by Dr. Baha Abu-Laban, the Associate Head of the Sociology Department, University of Alberta. The aim of the study is to describe the attitudes and adjustment of the Arab Muslims to life in Canada.

All information will be kept strictly confidential. Please be as frank and honest as possible in giving your responses. Thank you.

SOCIAL SURVEY OF THE ARAB MUSLIMS
IN ALBERTAAbout yourself and your family:

In answering the following questions, please place a check mark opposite the category which best describes your situation.

1. Present place of residence:

- 1. Edmonton
- 2. Lac La Biche

2. Age:

- 1. 20 years or less
- 2. 21 - 25 years
- 3. 26 - 30 years
- 4. 31 - 35 years
- 5. 36 - 40 years
- 6. 41 - 45 years
- 7. 46 - 50 years
- 8. 50 - 55 years
- 9. over 55 years

3. Sex:

- 1. male
- 2. female

4. Birth place:

- 1. Canada
- 2. Lebanon
- 3. Palestine
- 4. Jordan
- 5. Egypt
- 6. Syria
- 7. Other (please specify: -----)

5. Marital status:

- 1. single
- 2. married
- 3. divorced
- 4. widowed
- 5. other (please specify: -----)

6. Number of children, if any: (please circle the number)

0] 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

7. In the space below, please list their Arabic and English names:

Arabic name	English name or nickname
-------------	--------------------------

1. -----	-----
2. -----	-----
3. -----	-----
4. -----	-----
5. -----	-----
6. -----	-----
7. -----	-----
8. -----	-----
9. -----	-----

8. Now I am interested in asking you this question - Do you yourself have an English name?

---- 1. yes
---- 2. no

9. Are you a Canadian citizen?

---- 1. yes
---- 2. no (If no, what is your present citizenship:
-----)

10. If no, Do you plan to become a Canadian citizen?

---- 1. yes
---- 2. no
---- 3. do not know

11. Where was your wife (husband) born?

---- 1. Canada
---- 2. Lebanon
---- 3. Palestine
---- 4. Jordan
---- 5. Egypt
---- 6. Syria
---- 7. Other (please specify: -----)

12. What is the current religious affiliation of your wife (husband)?

---- 1. Muslim by birth
---- 2. converted to Islam
---- 3. Christian
---- 4. other (please specify: -----)

13. What is your present occupation? (Please be as specific as possible)

14. How far have you gone in your formal schooling?

- 1. never went to school
- 2. grade 5 or less
- 3. grade 6 - 8
- 4. grade 9 - 11
- 5. completed high school
- 6. some college
- 7. college degree
- 8. other (please specify: -----)

15. Where did you receive your education?

- 1. all in Arab countries
- 2. mostly in Arab countries
- 3. mostly in Canada
- 4. all in Canada
- 5. other (please specify: -----)

16. What is your annual family income (i.e., husband and wife combined and from all sources)?

- 1. less than \$3000
- 2. \$3000 - 4999
- 3. \$5000 - 6999
- 4. \$7000 - 9999
- 5. \$10000 - 15000
- 6. \$ over 15000

17. What are the reasons of your immigration to Canada?
Please number them in rank order:

- economic reason
- political reason
- relatives in Canada
- other (please specify: -----)

18. How long have you lived in Canada? ----- years

19. Have you lived in any other country?

- 1. yes
- 2. no

20. If yes, please indicate its name and number of years spent there

country	No. years
1. -----	-----
2. -----	-----
3. -----	-----

21. How well do you think you speak the English language?

- 1. very well
- 2. above average
- 3. average
- 4. below average
- 5. not at all

22. How well do you think you read the English language?

- 1. very well
- 2. above average
- 3. average
- 4. below average
- 5. not at all

23. How well do you think you write the English language?

- 1. very well
- 2. above average
- 3. average
- 4. below average
- 5. not at all

24. How well do you think you speak the Arabic language?

- 1. very well
- 2. above average
- 3. average
- 4. below average
- 5. not at all

25. How well do you think you read the Arabic language?

- 1. very well
- 2. above average
- 3. average
- 4. below average
- 5. not at all

26. How well do you think you write the Arabic language?

- 1. very well
- 2. above average
- 3. average
- 4. below average
- 5. not at all

27. How often do you use the Arabic language at home?

- 1. very frequently
- 2. frequently
- 3. sometimes
- 4. infrequently
- 5. not at all

28. Have you ever returned to visit the country of your origin?

- 1. yes
- 2. no

29. If yes, how did you feel while there?

- 1. I felt at home
- 2. I felt like a foreigner
- 3. Other (please specify: -----)

Now I would like to ask you a couple of questions about
(Canadian holidays).

30. Do you celebrate Christmas at home?

- 1. yes
- 2. no

31. If your children are invited by friends to a Christmas party, do you permit them to go?

- 1. yes
- 2. no

32. Do you buy gifts for your children at Christmas?

- 1. yes
- 2. no

Please place a check mark opposite the item which best describes your situation.

33. In the 12 months preceding your coming to Canada, on the average:

a) How often did you pray?

- 1. five times a day
- 2. about once a day
- 3. about once a week
- 4. few times a year (i.e. during the Eids)
- 5. none

b) How many days of Ramadan did you fast?

- 1. the whole month
- 2. most of it
- 3. about half of it
- 4. few days
- 5. none

c) How often did you eat pork?

- 1. never
- 2. rarely
- 3. sometimes
- 4. most of the times
- 5. regularly

d) How often did you drink alcoholic beverages?

- 1. never
- 2. rarely
- 3. sometimes
- 4. most of the times
- 5. regularly

34. Considering the past 12 months in this country, on the average:

a) How often did you pray?

- 1. five times a day
- 2. about once a day
- 3. about once a week
- 4. few times a year (i.e. Eid days)
- 5. none

b) How many days of last Ramadan did you fast?

- 1. the whole month
- 2. most of it
- 3. about half of it
- 4. few days
- 5. none

c) How often did you eat pork?

- 1. never
- 2. rarely
- 3. sometimes
- 4. most of the times
- 5. regularly

d) How often did you drink alcoholic beverages?

- 1. never
- 2. rarely
- 3. sometimes
- 4. most of the time
- 5. regularly

35. a) Among the following items there are two of the pillars of ablution (Wodo), please place a check mark before each:

- 1. washing of face
- 2. rinsing of mouth
- 3. washing of hair
- 4. rubbing the head with water

b) Please indicate the number of the obligatory units (Rakaa) after each of the following prayers:

- 1. morning (Subh) ----- rakaa
- 2. Sunset (maghrib) --- rakaa

c) Among the following items there are two of the pillars of Islam, please place a check before each:

- 1. Abstaining from drinking alcohol
- 2. Going to pilgrimage
- 3. Believing in the Day of Judgment
- 4. Believing in all the prophets before Muhammad
- 5. Giving of Alms (Zakat)

d) Please indicate if the following statements are true or false. (for each item please circle the appropriate letter ... T for true or F for false).

1. <u>Islam permits a Muslim man to marry a Jewish girl.</u>	T	F
2. <u>Islam permits a Muslim girl to marry a Christian boy.</u>	T	F
3. <u>Islam states that Jesus was killed and crucified.</u>	T	F
4. <u>According to Islam, Jesus was born from a virgin mother.</u>	T	F
5. <u>(Uhod) is the name of the first battle fought in Islam.</u>	T	F
6. <u>Please indicate the name of the prophet Muhammad's second successor (i.e., second Caliph).</u>	T	F

36. According to your belief, do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

a) There is only one God

---- 1. agree
 ---- 2. undecided
 ---- 3. disagree

b) Muhammad is the last prophet

---- 1. agree
 ---- 2. undecided
 ---- 3. disagree

c) Qur'an is the word of God

---- 1. agree
 ---- 2. undecided
 ---- 3. disagree

d) There is a Day of Judgment

---- 1. agree
 ---- 2. undecided
 ---- 3. disagree

37. Do you agree or disagree with the following:

a) In Canada, a good Muslim should pray five times a day

- 1. agree
- 2. undecided
- 3. disagree

b) In Canada, a good Muslim should fast the whole month of Ramadan

- 1. agree
- 2. undecided
- 3. disagree

c) In Canada, a good Muslim should not eat pork

- 1. agree
- 2. undecided
- 3. disagree

d) In Canada, a good Muslim should not drink alcohol

- 1. agree
- 2. undecided
- 3. disagree

38. Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with each of the following items by checking the category which best represents your feelings:

a) Western dancing for a Muslim man

- 1. strongly agree
- 2. agree
- 3. undecided
- 4. disagree
- 5. strongly disagree

b) Western dancing for a married Muslim woman

- 1. strongly agree
- 2. agree
- 3. undecided
- 4. disagree
- 5. strongly disagree

c) Western dancing for a Muslim girl

- 1. strongly agree
- 2. agree
- 3. undecided
- 4. disagree
- 5. strongly disagree

d) A Muslim youngman marrying a non-virgin girl

- 1. strongly agree
- 2. agree
- 3. undecided
- 4. disagree
- 5. strongly disagree

e) Father or husband being the final authority of the family
(i.e., one whose word is final)

- 1. strongly disagree
- 2. disagree
- 3. undecided
- 4. agree
- 5. strongly agree

f) A Muslim woman having a job outside the home

- 1. strongly agree
- 2. agree
- 3. undecided
- 4. disagree
- 5. strongly disagree

g) A Muslim woman wearing a sleeveless dress

- 1. strongly agree
- 2. agree
- 3. undecided
- 4. disagree
- 5. strongly disagree

h) Parents selecting the mates (husbands or wives) for their
children

- 1. strongly disagree
- 2. disagree
- 3. undecided
- 4. agree
- 5. strongly agree

i) A Muslim woman wearing a bathing suit

- 1. strongly agree
- 2. agree
- 3. undecided
- 4. disagree
- 5. strongly disagree

j) Boys and girls studying together in high school

- 1. strongly agree
- 2. agree
- 3. undecided
- 4. disagree
- 5. strongly disagree

k) Muslims practicing birth control

- 1. strongly agree
- 2. agree
- 3. undecided
- 4. disagree
- 5. strongly disagree

l) Muslim celebrating the Christmas

- 1. strongly agree
- 2. agree
- 3. undecided
- 4. disagree
- 5. strongly disagree

39. Please indicate your opinion regarding the following

a) A Muslim girl marrying a non-Muslim Canadian boy

- 1. strongly agree
- 2. agree
- 3. undecided
- 4. disagree
- 5. strongly disagree

b) A Muslim boy marrying a non-Muslim Canadian girl

- 1. strongly agree
- 2. agree
- 3. undecided
- 4. disagree
- 5. strongly disagree

c) A Muslim girl marrying a Canadian boy converted to Islam

- 1. strongly agree
- 2. agree
- 3. undecided
- 4. disagree
- 5. strongly disagree

d) A Muslim boy marrying a Canadian girl converted to Islam

- 1. strongly agree
- 2. agree
- 3. undecided
- 4. disagree
- 5. strongly disagree

40. Please check the item which is most agreeable to you

a) What do you consider yourself?

- 1. Canadian
- 2. Canadian-Arab
- 3. Arab-Canadian
- 4. Arab
- 5. other (please specify: -----)

b) What do you think the Canadian people consider you?

- 1.. Canadian
- 2. Canadian-Arab
- 3. Arab-Canadian
- 4. Arab
- 5. other (please specify: -----)

c) As a naturalized Canadian or an immigrant to Canada I should spend all my life in this country

- 1. strongly agree
- 2. agree
- 3. undecided
- 4. disagree
- 5. strongly disagree

d) As a naturalized Canadian or an immigrant to Canada, I feel I should defend this country whenever I am called upon

- 1. strongly agree
- 2. agree
- 3. undecided
- 4. disagree
- 5. strongly disagree

41. Please check the item which best describes your situation

a) What are your three closest friends?

- 1. All Canadian
- 2. two Canadian and one Arab
- 3. two Arab and one Canadian
- 4. all Arab

b) What are the three closest families with whom you exchange visits on individual or familial level?

- 1. all Canadian
- 2. two Canadian and one Arab
- 3. two Arab and one Canadian
- 4. all Arab

c) With whom do you spend your spare time (i.e., leisure time?)

- 1. all with Canadian
- 2. mostly with Canadian
- 3. mostly with Arab
- 4. all with Arab

d) If you are asked to select the three nearest neighbors to your home, what do you prefer them to be?

- 1. all Canadian
- 2. two Canadian and one Arab
- 3. two Arab and one Canadian
- 4. all Arab

e) In which clubs or organizations (social, cultural, professional, ... etc.) do you hold membership?

1. In the appropriate spaces provided below, please list the names of these organizations.
2. In the appropriate spaces, please put checks beside the names of those organizations whose meetings you attend regularly.
3. In the appropriate spaces, please put checks beside the names of those organizations in which you are a committee member.
4. In the appropriate spaces, please put checks beside the names of those organizations in which you are an officer.

Name of Organization	attend regularly	committee member	Officer

42. If you have any other comments, please indicate below.

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